

## Columbia Treaty Inked

# Canada-U.S. Amity Cited

By Robert Moon

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The signing of the Columbia River power development treaty in Washington Tuesday emphasizes the true bonds of friendship between Canada and the United States.

As friends, the two nations have agreed to a working business arrangement of mutual advantage, for at a cost of almost \$500,000,000 the Canadians very shortly will build three dams to increase downstream United States power production.

For its part, the United States also will spend millions installing the facilities to make use of this regulated flow and will return half the power produced thereby, plus cash, to Canada.

### Good Will Stressed

It is as simple as that, and much good will pervades the formal treaty-signing ceremony by President Eisenhower and Secretary of State Christian A. Herter of the United States and Prime Minister John G. Diefenbaker and Justice Minister Davie Fulton of Canada.

It is indeed the biggest joint developmental undertaking since the St. Lawrence Seaway and it is one of the last great public ceremonies, in which Mr. Eisenhower will participate as President.

In the long and tangled history of United States-Canadian relations, this forms one of the brightest chapters. Like those same relations, it has not been without sweat, tears, and agonizing years.

### Mutually Beneficial

From the Canadian standpoint, the one man who has fought harder than any other single Canadian for its fulfillment and who held out for better terms throughout was not present for the signing ceremony. He is Gen. A. G. L. McNaughton, the Canadian chairman of the International Joint Commission.

Even those ultimate stricter terms, which call for a 50-50 split on the downstream power benefits between the two countries, whereas the original bargaining was on the basis of 80-20 in favor of the United States, are good for the Americans. For the Canadians, they are an endorsement of their own self-respect.

There are a couple of hurdles still remaining, but the main event now appears accomplished.

The treaty must be ratified by the United States Congress and the Canadian Parliament. This likely will come about within a few months. Also, the Canadian Government must iron out a few wrinkles with the British Columbia Government, which will operate the project on a public power arrangement.

Notwithstanding these remaining steps, the Canadian Government hopes the construction on the Canadian side of the border can start this year. It must start soon because the treaty stipulates the first storage facilities must be ready within five years.

Accordingly, the first Canadian dams to move off the planning boards and onto the contract level will be at Duncan Lake and at the Arrow Lakes, very close to the United States border.

### Controlled Flow Due

The second phase of storage must be ready on the Canadian side of the border within nine years from the time of treaty signing. It will involve the third and more costly construction work at Mica Creek, where the long northern initial flow of the Columbia suddenly bends toward the United States 210 miles to the south. This too must start within a couple of years for practical reasons. The Canadian Government hopes all three dams will reach the construction stage at about the same time this year.

The cost of these three dams will run close to \$350,000,000 in total. On top of that, there will be a transmission line expenditure of \$115,000,000.

Other projects on the Canadian side are still somewhat vague but will come in later years. For the present, there will be work for several thousand men, which will provide a pump-priming surge for the construction industry and the Canadian economy.

For its part, the surge of the Columbia will be controlled, a development of great consequence for the hungry power maw of the northwestern United States and its flood-control problems.

The natural flow of the Columbia at the border can vary by as much as 40 to 1 through seasonal fluctuation. By building reservoirs, the flow can be con-

trolled and the power production vastly increased.

This, in essence, is the core of this development and the reason for the power payment back to Canada by the United States. It is the reason for the early start which will be necessary on the Canadian side, for it is this control factor which is the key to the whole Columbia at this stage of its development by man.

For this Canadian storage regulation, the United States will pay back, in power, one-half the increase in downstream hydroelectricity attributable to the operation of the Canadian reservoirs. The United States also will pay Canada cash equivalent to one-half the estimated savings from flood damage downstream which otherwise might have taken place.

### Cost Estimates Noted

Although its own construction is not so urgent, the United States nonetheless plans, like Canada, to spend close to \$500,000,000 within the next 10 years. By 1985, the United States development expenditure may rise to \$756,000,000.

Estimates for United States construction are low on the additional turbine end and high on the dam construction. The controversial Libby Dam, which the treaty gives the United States five years to start if it wants to go ahead with it, would run to \$323,000,000. The chances are it will be built.

The United States estimates also include \$106,000,000 for transmission lines and only \$24,000,000 for additional turbines, since the existing capacity is still not used to the full.

The 1958 estimates provide for a substantial increase in generating capacity. This includes the building of the \$325,000,000 Wells Dam, the third down from the Canadian border, below Grand Coulee and Chief Joseph, and the last great remaining reservoir on the United States side of the Columbia mainstem.

Some changes in detail have taken place recently, but these remain the main principles of the treaty being signed.

Like so many treaties they make dull documentary reading. These facts and figures, however, pulsate with the lifeblood of two great countries being bound closer economically by their end result but remaining distinctly separate politically through the processes by which they were calculated.